[*English*]

SHRI S. KRISHAN KUMAR: There are several schemes for development of gas potential in Gujarat. It is an on-going process and the gas production in Gujarat will get a quantum jump when the Tapti Gas Field is developed. Gandhar–II Project is also awaiting Government sanction. If you are asking about the development process of gas in Gujarat, this is an on-going process and we are giving emphasis to it.

[*Translation*]

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEYA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, my question has not been answered correctly. I wanted to know the necessity to commission the third project while two projects were already lying idéal for want of gas. When will you supply gas to these projects. This is a scam involving Rs. 1200 crores. Officers have finalized all the contracts within four days. While doing so, the indigenous companies have been ignored. The Government should tell us about the supply of the gas.

[*English*]

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): I very well appreciate the concern of the hon. Member for supply of gas to the two power stations which he has emphasised just now. It will always be the endeavour of the Government to see that investment made for generation of power, whether in Gujarat or elsewhere, and the feed-stock that is made and committed to this, is fulfilled. We will be doing our best to see that these power stations will not suffer for want of gas.

With regard to the supply of 1.5 million cubic metres of gas per day to the NTPC, this decision was taken after a great detail of discussion with the Chief Minister of Gujarat with the Prime Minister and myself. This was done not behind the screen, not behind anybody. This decision was taken quite openly and this commitment of 1.5 million cubic metres of gas per day to the NTPC was made. Hon. Member should know that there has not been any hanky–panky in the process of generation of power in this country. (*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

MR. SPEAKER: Only two questions have been answered in half an hour.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI HARIN PATHAK: Gujarat has been facing injustice for the last five years. A sort of agitation is imminent there.....(*Interruptions*).....great injustice is being done.

MR. SPEAKER: Please, sit down. This is not proper. You are all rising to ask supplementaries simulatneously. It is not at all proper. There are other questions also which should also be replied. 35 minutes have passed and we have taken up only 2 questions.

[*English*]

Exploration of Oil Reserves

*615. SHRI RAM KAPSE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are huge oil reserves in Gujarat and West Bengal;

(b) if so, the reasons for delay in exploring the same; and

(c) the time by which the oil is likely to be explored from those reserves?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI S. KRISHAN KUMAR): (a) to (c). There has been no delay in exploring for oil and gas in Gujarat and West Bengal. Exploration for oil in Gujarat since 1956 has established geo-

logical reserves to the tune of 768.55 mmt of oil as on 1.1.1991 of which 254.57 mmt of oil is recoverable. Exploration for oil in West Bengal was initiated in the year 1949 and 41 exploratory wells have been drilled and 3 wells are under drilling. No oil reserves have been established so far. Exploration work is continuing in both States.

SHRI RAM KAPSE: We are heavily dependent on oil imports. The country needs 50 lakh tonnes of oil out of which only 30 lakh tonnes of oil is indigenously produced and for the rest we are depending on the imports, spending a huge amount of foreign exchange. Is it a fact that there are claims that the basins of West Bengal and Gujarat contain huge oil reserves which the ONGC is neglecting?

Is it also a fact that carbonate rock extending from the coast offshore of Bay of Bengal to the South West for a length of 100 kilometres has been demarcated as potential for oil production?

SHRI KRISHAN KUMAR: Sir, the hon. Member's figures are correct except that it is not in lakhs but it is in million tonnes. There is a vigorous programme of exploration and production of oil in the various sedimentary basins of our country. Some basins are prolific; there are different categories of basins. West Bengal comes in the second category. The exploration is going on. 41 wells have been dug in West Bengal but no trace of hydrocarbons have so far been found.

Similarly, in Gujarat, which is next to Bombay High, highest activity of exploration is going on.

The hon. Member is ostensibly referring to certain claims made by some scientists that there are large reserves of oil in certain areas of Gujarat and West Bengal and ONGC is not taking sufficient interest in developing those reserves. Already about Rs. 600 crores have been spent in West Bengal and about Rs. 3,500 crores in Gujarat. The claims made by the particular scientist have been found to be untenable and very far-fetched. We have, for production of oil, a scientific basis and sequence that is first surveys, then exploration, discovery and then developmental drilling leading on to production. And this is being carried on, on a scientific basis. There is no question of neglecting any of the potential fields either in Gujarat or in West Bengal.

PROF. RAM KAPSE: The global tender was issued for 72 areas for oil exploration recently. Which are those areas included in this global tender from West Bengal and Gujarat?

SHRI S. KRISHAN KUMAR: Sir, 72 blocs – 33 on-shore and 39 offshore have been given for international bidding and the final bids are expected by middle of this month. On the Bengal on-shore, there are two blocs, one is in the districts of Nadia and Hooghly and the second is in the districts of Midnapore and Howrah. In the Bengal offshore, there are three blocs in the sea but there are no names but only technical nomenature.

May I know which was the other state you mentioned.

PROF. RAM KAPSE: It is about Gujarat. If you want to say anything about Maharashtra, that is also welcome.

SHRI S. KRISHAN KUMAR: In Gujarat Kutch on-shore, there are three blocs which have been put up in this international bidding. The names are not available we have some technical notation for each block.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, in our country, we are spending the maximum amount of money on foreign exchange basically for import of oil. At the moment, we have some very good reserves in the Bombay High region, in Gujarat and in all these adjoining areas. However, one finds that the crude which is being recovered from these wells is not suitable for our refineries here. And it has also come to the notice of lot of people that most of this crude is being

exported to foreign countries and against that some crude which is suitable for our refinaries is being imported. So if this is a fact, will the hon. Minister let us know whether the refineries here are going to be suitably modified so that the crude oil which is procured from our own oil wells can be refined here itself?

SHRI S. KRISHAN KUMAR: Sir, roughly 30 million tonnes of crude on the average which is being produced in the country as of now per year is fully utilised in our refinaries. Only the balance required is imported. Of course certain types of crudes are required for certain types of refineries depending on the product mix and the technology. So this is taken into account in the import as well as in the technical planning of the future refineries.

SHRI TARIT BARAN TOPDAR: Till the technology is available to harness the natural gas into our domestic and industrial consumption, how much of natural gas will be wasted in terms of dollars?

SHRI S. KRISHAN KUMAR: The production of natural gas in the country is 48 million cubic metres per day. It is proposed to be raised to 80 million to 90 million cubic metres per day at the end of the 8th Plan. Presently about 11 million cubic metres of gas is being flared. About 10 million is being flared due to lack of infrastructure. As I said earlier, through a series of development programmes including a very massive gas flaring reduction project, we hope to reduce flaring to zero by the end of 1994-95 financial year.

SHRI TARIT BARAN TOPDAR: What is the outflow of dollars?

[*Translation*]

Freedom Fighters' Pension

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*616. SHRI RAM TAHAL CHOUDHARY:

SHRI THAYIL JOHN ANJALOSE:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of applications for grant of freedom fighters' pension pending with the Union Government at present, State-wise;

(b) the reasons for their pendency; and

(c) the steps taken to dispose of these applications expeditiously?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS(SHRI RAM LAL RAHI): (a), (b) and (c). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

The last date prescribed for receipt of applications under the Swatantrata Sainik Samman Pension – 1980 was 31.3.1982. All the applications received by the prescribed date had been considered once and disposed off. However, new applications continue to be received even after the prescribed date. These are 'delayed' applications and are liable for summary rejection unless they are accompanied by documentary evidence from official records in support of their claimed sufferings. There are 9,387 delayed applications pending as on 8.4.1992. An Annexure showing the State-wise position is enclosed.

Incomplete information, non-production of documentary evidence from official records in respect of the sufferings undergone and non-receipt of the recommendations of the State Governments are the main reasons for their pendency.

Special drives are launched from time to time to dispose off the applications.